



# HAULTAIN and RECIPROCITY

F. W. G. HAULTAIN, Conservative Leader in  
Saskatchewan, Strongly Endorses  
Reciprocity Agreement

## SASKATCHEWAN'S UNANIMOUS VERDICT FOR RECIPROCITY

"That this House is of opinion that the proposed reciprocal trade arrangement between Canada and the United States will be of benefit to the people of Saskatchewan;

"That while expressing this opinion, this House is nevertheless of the opinion that the proposed arrangement does not fully meet the desires of the people of Saskatchewan with regard to general tariff reduction;

"That this House also desires to express itself as strongly in favor of a Canadian trade policy looking to an immediate increase of the British preference and the ultimate establishment of Free Trade within the Empire;

"Also that in the opinion of this House the said agreement, by its promotion of the prosperity and development of Canada, will thereby greatly strengthen Canada's power for Imperial defence, and thus directly assist the British Empire;

"And further, that in the opinion of this House the duties on agricultural implements should at an early date be further reduced if not abrogated."

The above resolution was unanimously adopted by the Saskatchewan Legislature on March 8, 1911. Mr. F. W. G. Haultain, the Opposition leader, vying with Premier Scott in strong indorsement of reciprocity with the United States. Mr. Haultain's speech in support of the resolution was a notable utterance. In eloquent language he declared that the benefits to be derived from reciprocity with the United States were so great as to cause all considerations of party to sink into insignificance. Space available in this pamphlet will not admit of reprinting Mr. Haultain's speech in extenso, but the following excerpts therefrom set forth his views:

Having in mind the fact that reciprocity with the United States was a policy which represented not only a step forward, but a policy which seemed to be approved even in the earlier stages of government in Canada, even before they had what might be termed responsible government; having that in view he must confess that when the reciprocity agreement was first spoken of and first announced he had taken only one view and that was that the agreement was a move in the right direction. He was quite free to say, after reading a great many of the speeches that had been made in

other places, that he saw no necessity to change his first impressions.

He confessed that he had looked first at the agreement from the point of view of the Western man, as one much more concerned in the interests of the people of his own province than in the affairs of other provinces. That might seem a provincial view to take. As far as he had been able to study the tariff question in Canada, and able to draw conclusions, he had never heard or read of what he might call a truly national view of the tariff question being taken by any political party in the Dominion. All were selfish; all looked at it from the point of view of their local interests. Even today people in one end of the Dominion clamored for the agreement because it suited their own occupation and business, and people in the other end of the Dominion clamored against it because it didn't suit their own particular business. And the people in the middle west clamored for the agreement because it suited their particular industry and made for their interests. He thought, therefore, he was quite justified in taking the narrow view—the more selfish view—of the Western man.

If he had rightly read Western opinion, if he had rightly conceived the attitude of the Western man, he had

been inclined for a large number of years to view the tariff question not so much from the point of view of a trade position while taking a selfish position view of the people immediately represented. Liberals and Conservatives, alike, in the matter of tariff reform downwards, had been willing to go further than their party in its announced practice was willing to go. That should be the attitude of the Western man. Why should Eastern Canada wish them to take an unselfish position while taking a selfish position themselves? Was not Ontario equally interested with Saskatchewan and the rest of the Dominion in seeing the Western prairies populated and in seeing the people living on the prairies prospering and increasing their wealth? The people of the East had an immediate interest in anything that would strengthen the welfare and promote the production and prosperity of the West.

#### The Future of the West.

If one thing appealed to him more than another it was the fact that eventually the northern part of the continent was going to be the largest producer of food for the whole of the continent, to say nothing with regard to the rest of the world. The United States was rapidly ceasing to be an exporting country. It would become less and less so as far as food products were concerned. Eventually the United States would have to come to them. Eventually, the people of the United States would have to come to Canada for foodstuffs and give them everything that was going to be given at the present time. There was an old saying that what was given soon was twice given. The inevitable destiny for Saskatchewan was to be a food producer for the whole of the continent and the sooner it was able to establish that trade relation the better.

He had to confess that at times he was afflicted with a great sense of perplexity when reading references to the reciprocity agreement in the Canadian press and in the Ottawa Hansard. The cry had been raised that if they were so prosperous today why should they go into an experiment for further prosperity? But he thought that if they could add prosperity to prosperity they should not cavil at the chances of becoming too prosperous. He did not think they were so prosperous in the West they could not afford to run the chance of waxing fat a little more.

#### The Effect on Wheat.

With regard to the price of wheat, he would not express an opinion. The result would only be known with the working out of the agreement. If the latter was going to provide a better market for their wheat, it was a good arrangement and should be carried out. So far as he could see he was inclined

to think for a time at any rate there would be a benefit in the price of Western Canadian wheat. But apart altogether from that, even if their farmers did not get one cent more for their wheat, he would consider it a desirable thing that their wheat should go to the States because eventually there must be there an important market owing to the fact that the States would be obliged to restrict their exportation. The point about the agreement which appealed to him was that it provided another market for the farmers and fishermen and other producers of foodstuffs throughout the whole Dominion. The great question was that affecting foodstuffs. To his mind it did not go far enough. He thought there could only be one opinion as to the manufacturers pressing unduly on the people of the West. Senator Cox in a recent letter to the press had said that the underlying fear on the part of the manufacturers was not that their position would be altered appreciably by the proposed arrangement, but that the latter would be a prelude for the wholesale bringing down of duties later on. That was also the fear of the high tariff people in the United States.

#### The Annexation Bogey.

A great deal had been said about annexation or continentalism in the United States. As far as the annexation cry was concerned he wished to say at once that he was just as much of a Britisher as anyone in the Dominion. He would be prepared to go a long way rather than sacrifice his British birthright or connection. For that he would be willing to forego tariff reductions and many other things if it were necessary, but he was not prepared to set up his British proclivities when there was no necessity for so doing. Anyone was just as capable of expressing an opinion on that matter as anyone else. No doubt there was a strong feeling in favor of what might be called continentalism in the United States. That was not an unnatural ambition perhaps. Some of them have it in their heart of hearts. Their own form was continentalism under the British flag rather than under the Stars and Stripes. It was an altogether legitimate aspiration. He did not think they should quarrel with certain gentlemen in the United States because in a moment of exuberance they expressed opinions in favor of annexation. He did not think those opinions were the opinions of the saner portion of the people of the United States. He did not think that they were the opinions of the official people on either side of politics there and certainly they were not the opinions of the very best portion of the people of the United States. He believed that the people of the United States were

quite prepared to grow up within their tremendous boundaries regardless of the nation growing up side by side with them.

They had never heard of a political agitation arising where people were prosperous and contented. If right and proper tendencies were allowed to prevail, the Americans would ultimately become good Britishers as well. They would form a part of the community which made British laws and handed down British traditions. He did not think there would be any tendency to take them away from the mother country. Selling butter and eggs would not separate them from the traditions they had as a people. As a people they had developed their own ideals and selling grain abroad would not destroy them.

#### Would Fight Annexation

Eventually, as he had said, they would have to go to the United States. They were going to live alongside their great neighbor to the south but they would still be prepared despite anything to fight against anything like annexation. Living alongside people composed largely as they themselves were, with the same customs, laws and traditions, they would not neglect, on the other hand, to develop their own ideals and nationality and keep up the old home and the imperial connections. They would live together on an equality, realizing that they had a broad duty to establish relations of peace and unity and friendship and neighborliness with the people of the United States. What was more likely to draw them together, not alone on the material side of the question, than the tremendous impetus in their trade relations? How could they avoid coming to closer business and closer relations, and so removing all obstacles to a friendly understanding between all the English speaking people on that continent?

#### Breaking Up of Parties

There was a movement going on all over that continent in which men were more and more breaking away from strict party allegiance. He believed there was a gradual breaking up taking place among political parties on both sides of the line. Questions were coming up which would develop great lines of cleavage. That was because people on both sides of the line were beginning to think. That was the time for politicians to begin to act. They could not ignore the effect of great popular movements all over the continent in favor of better government, in favor of getting right down to first principles rather than discussing superficial differences which were contained in the party platform.

#### Only One Thing to Be Done

There was only one thing to be done. If a thing was right they must

go straight on in the direction into which it led without regard to tradition, policies or anything else. He believed the West required the proposed change. If it was good for the West and not bad for the whole of the Dominion, and he was not convinced that it would be bad for the whole Dominion, why should they not support it? He might be criticised by men who took a broader view so far as intimate knowledge of the question was concerned from a purely economic standpoint. But, from the national point of view, he did not yield to anyone in that respect.

#### Not Looking for Lessons in Patriotism

In conclusion Mr. Haultain said: "We out here are just as well able as magnates in the east; I say we are just as well able to decide what is patriotic or unpatriotic as they are. I am not prepared to sit at the feet of any of these eastern Gamaliels and study loyalty. If the proposed arrangement does not turn out as satisfactorily as it is hoped or intended, it will be a simple thing enough to change it or to abrogate it. The arrangement can be done away with practically at once and that is another reason for trying the experiment. I may be called selfish, local and provincial, but I am perfectly willing to accept these large adjectives."

#### Haultain Reaffirms His Approval

On the closing day of the session of the Legislature, Mr. Haultain reaffirmed his support of the reciprocity pact by seconding a motion presented by Mr. Motherwell, which was in part as follows:

"That this Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan believes that one effect of the proposed reciprocal trade agreement between Canada and the United States will be to help draw all the English speaking nations into more friendly relationships, which is a consummation highly desirable, especially from the standpoint of the prospective, if not the existing situation on the Pacific Ocean, a situation of vital moment to Canada;

"(2) That efforts to provoke ill feeling between Canadians and United States citizens are in the last degree censurable."

#### Borden's Bitter Opposition

In contrast with the stand of Mr. Haultain, a lifelong resident of the West, we have Mr. Borden's emphatic statement to the grain growers at Brandon, and repeated by him at a score of other places.

"I am absolutely opposed to the reciprocity agreement. And if you gentlemen in the West were prepared to make me prime minister tomorrow if I would support that agreement, I would NOT do it."